IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Paragraph beginning at line 9 of page 2 has been amended as follows:

Meanwhile, in a case where some trouble has occurred during operation of the molecular pump so that the rotor section has collided with the stator section and the other fixed members within the molecular pump, the angular momentum of the rotor section is transmitted to the stator section, fixed members and the like so that a larger torque is instantly generated which rotates the ~~whole of the~~ entire molecular pump in a rotating direction of the rotor section. This torque also exerts a large stress to the vacuum vessel through the flange.

Paragraph beginning at line 27 of page 2 has been amended as follows:

FIG. 23 ~~is a view for explaining the~~ a flange having the buffering mechanism as proposed in the patent-related reference 1.

Paragraph beginning at line 17 of page 3 has been amended as follows:

Upon mounting the turbo-molecular pump onto the vacuum vessel, the bolts 202 are to be fixed at the ends of the bolt holes 203 in the rotation direction of the rotor. Then, in ~~a~~ the case of ~~occurrence of~~ a torque being generated which rotates the turbo-molecular pump in the rotation direction of the rotor when the rotor section is broken and ~~touched~~ touches the stator section and the like, the flange 201 slides (slips) in the rotation direction of the rotor so that the shock caused by the torque in the turbo-molecular pump can be buffered.

Paragraph beginning at line 26 of page 3 has been amended as follows:

Further, the patent-related reference 1 also discloses a technique ~~that~~ where each bolt hole (of circular cross section) of the flange 201 is formed to be sufficiently larger than the outer diameter of the bolt 202, and a buffering material is interposed between the bolt 202 and bolt hole 203.

Heading at line 1 of page 5 has been deleted as follows:

~~SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION~~

Please insert the following new heading between lines 25 and 26:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Paragraph beginning at line 3 of page 6 has been amended as follows:

To achieve the above object, the present invention of a first aspect provides a molecular pump including a cylindrical casing which is provided with a gas inlet port and a gas discharge port; a stator which is formed within the casing; a shaft which is disposed concentrically with the stator; a bearing which ~~pivotally~~ rotatably supports the shaft so as to be rotatable relative to the stator; a rotor which is mounted on the shaft and rotates integrally with the shaft; a motor which drives and rotates the shaft; and a flange portion which is provided at the gas inlet port side of the casing and is provided with a buffering portion to be deformed by a shock due to a torque acting on the casing in the rotation direction of the rotor ~~acting on the casing~~.

Heading at line 16 of page 11 has been amended as follows:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Paragraph beginning at line 21 of page 12 has been amended as follows:

FIG. 1 is a view showing an example of a configuration for mounting a molecular pump 1 of an embodiment in accordance with the present invention to a vacuum vessel 205.

Paragraph beginning at line 5 of page 23 has been amended as follows:

In the flange 61b, each bolt hole 14 is a normal one having a circular cross section, and adapted to position the bolt 65. Further, a cavity portion 77 is formed at a predetermined distance from the bolt hole 14 in the direction opposite to the rotation direction of the rotor section 24. The cavity portion 77 is a through hole having a circular cross section of an inner diameter smaller than that of the bolt hole 14. The portion 76 between the bolt hole 14 and cavity portion 77 constitutes a thin-wall portion 76.

Paragraph beginning at line 13 of page 25 has been amended as follows:

FIG. 8 is a view for explaining a flange ~~61f~~ 61e in accordance with yet another embodiment of the flange 61.

Paragraph beginning at line 7 of page 38 has been amended as follows:

The flange 61p has its buffering portion constituted by the bolt hole 14 having a circular cross section, a guiding portion 136 for guiding the bolt 65 toward a thin-wall portion 132, and elongated holes 134, 130 (first and second through-holes) acting as through holes for forming the thin-wall portion 132.